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Miss Baldwin of Minnesota, suggested that the League send to Miss Tyler, of Iowa, a telegram expressing regret for her withdrawal from active commission work, and appreciation of her services to the

League. It was voted that Miss Baldwin be directed to send such a telegram. The following telegram was sent:

"Congratulations and best wishes from the League of library commissions, with sincere regret that you were absent from this meeting, and the hope that you will consider yourself a life member of the League, to which you have rendered such valuable service."

The meeting then adjourned.

SPECIAL LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

FIRST SESSION

The first session of the Fifth annual conference of the Special Libraries Association was opened in the parlor of the Hotel Kaaterskill, on Tuesday afternoon, June 25, 1913, with the president in the chair.

Mrs. A. W. Von Hohoff of New York, opened the meeting with a paper entitled, "Municipal reference work in New York City." She spoke of the necessity out of which this collection had grown and the lack of ease with which information of this character had been previously obtained. In the short space of time during which this new library has been established over 1,000 people have consulted it, mostly employees of the city. It is serving especially those employees who are studying for civil service examination leading to advancement in the city's work; newspaper men, lawyers and real estate dealers have also found it of value. A short resume of the kind of literature on its shelves was given. This library aims to keep New York City in close touch with the activities and movements of other cities.*

The second paper on the program was by Mr. N. C. Kingsbury, Vice-President of the American Tel. & Tel. Company, upon "The library—A necessity of modern busi-

ness."† Few people realize, who have had any connection with the library movement, that specialization has come to mean what it has. Almost no one would have supposed that even a large public service corporation was maintaining five distinct library collections, two at least of which are in charge of trained librarians. This paper, suggestive as it was of the increased activity along library lines in the business world, led to interesting questions.

It was followed by a paper by Mr. Andrew L. Bostwick, municipal reference librarian of St. Louis, entitled "Relations between the municipal library and legislators." He emphasized the necessity for bridging the gap between the average librarian and the average city assemblyman, also the potency of personality which should bring about a close and cordial relationship between the library and its readers. He spoke of the light manner in which municipal libraries were often created and the subsequent selection of the librarian. The different kind of legislators as existing in the average city were aptly held before the audience in no unmistakable terms; and finally, the choice of a proper librarian with his necessary qualifications was presented, together with the manner in which the data accumulated

*For full paper see "Special Libraries," 1913.

†For full paper see Library Journal, Aug., 1913.

within the library should be put into the hands of the legislator.

Dr. W. Dawson Johnston, librarian of Columbia University, presented the next paper entitled, "The relation between special and general libraries."* "The rise of the special library is undoubtedly due to the limitations of the general library. These have been limitations of location as well as limitations of service. A general library can not in the nature of things be everywhere and even when it is located so as to serve excellently the needs of a special institution, it can not render the service of a collection selected for a specific purpose. There must then be special libraries for special institutions, societies, clubs, and offices.

"The special library, however, has its limitations also. It is in danger of having the disadvantages of a private library without the advantages of a public library. This is so true as to remind one of Charles Lamb's description of pamphlets as books which are no books. In similar manner we are sometimes compelled to look upon special libraries as libraries which are no libraries at all, especially where they are so small and so little used as not to require the services of a librarian.

"There are too many special libraries which are not to be distinguished from general libraries except by their location, too many that are simply inferior general libraries, too many that may simply be described as general libraries gone wrong."

He discussed the policy in the elimination of books in each type of library, the matter of the conditions of transfer from a special library to a general one, the relations between the two in respect to bibliographic service, and in conclusion said: "The special library forms an important auxiliary to the general library and especially to the university library, and more important as subjects of research become more practical in character. The general library, because of its comprehensiveness and size must in the nature of things be

more useful and must in the aggregate be more used. But if a special library is well selected, that is, if only the best and latest books are admitted to its shelves, it must be proportionately more used than the general library and with better results. Some time may be wasted in finding a special library and in gaining admission to it, but little is wasted in it, while in the general library the time wasted in getting books and in reading books which were better left unread is simply appalling."

Following this very interesting discourse, a paper entitled, "The library of the School of Architecture at Harvard University—The treatment of collections relating to landscape architecture, including city planning," by Miss Theodora Kimball, librarian of this library, was read by title in the absence of the author.*

Miss Helen R. Hosmer, of the General Electric Company, Schenectady, N. Y., presented the last paper of the afternoon, entitled "The library of the research laboratory, General Electric Company."

"Research expects rebuffs, expects to accept a small advance instead of a revolution, expects to make mistakes, and frequently to fail, but intends to let no lesson go unheeded, and to learn from every stumble.

"Inasmuch as every special library comes into very close contact with those it serves, it is not strange the research library partakes of the same nature that pervades the research laboratory. It too is, in this case particularly, a field for experiment.

"The object in view is of course to render as readily available as possible all the information contained in the library on subjects of present or possible future interest to the laboratory staff.

"The main sources of this information are two: first, the scientific and technical literature, consisting of books, periodicals, pamphlets and special publications, clippings, and abstracts from the technical literature, compiled by the publication depart-

*A reprint can be obtained from the Secretary of the "Spec. Lib. Assn."

*For full report see "Special Libraries," 1913.

(1) See forthcoming issue of "Special Libraries."

ment of the company, and second the reports from the various laboratories of the company."

The handling of the different classes of material in this library is minutely described and covers several unique features, both in the kinds of material handled and in the methods used. In concluding, she said: "We are attempting to build up a system requiring the minimum amount of work for maintenance, sufficiently simple to appeal to the most hurried research mind, flexible enough to admit of continued improvement without demolition, and yet adequate to the varied needs of practical scientific investigation."

Mr. R. R. Bowker, of the Library Journal, added some very interesting thoughts along the general trend of the meeting drawn from his many years of experience in library and commercial fields, which were much appreciated by all those present.

SECOND SESSION

The second session of the Association was called to order in the Ladies' Parlor at 3 p. m., June 26th, by the president.

A few general introductory remarks were made by the president regarding the purpose of this session which hinged chiefly about the question of handling clippings.

Honorable Robert Luce in a very carefully prepared address then discussed, under the title, "The clipping bureau and the library," the internal working of the clipping bureau which bears his name. Probably few librarians have realized the enormous volume of detail handled by the large clipping bureau in the course of a day's work. Mr. Luce in his paper has carefully brought home that fact and urged that many users of material from clipping bureaus, and among them librarians, had never learned how to correctly judge results of clipping-bureau service. This judgment should be used upon the mass result rather than upon detail. An interesting description of the method of caring for a collection of 20,000 or more articles of his

own proved an important part of the paper. A discussion of the "scrap book" and its function in the library was also handled. An earnest plea was made for co-operation on the part of the librarians ordering material from the clipping bureau. The employment of the clipping bureau is a step in the line of efficiency. "No man accustomed to business methods can fail to be struck with the waste therein due to the employment of high-grade minds on low-grade work. When some part of the working time of a public servant possessing intellectual acumen is put into manual labor that can be as well performed by a youth without special training, there is economic loss. When your subordinates handle the scissors and the pastebrush, you are paying them for work that can more quickly and much more cheaply be done in our cutting rooms."

A significant question by Mr. Bowker brought out the following facts: "After the reader marks the newspaper it goes to the cutter. There is very seldom any loss there. Occasionally an item is slashed or overlooked, and when the clippings have been cut and pasted they go to the sorter, whose duty it is to sort them by groups. We have the clippings divided into 128 classifications. We allow each customer one of those classifications." Mr. Luce answered many other questions raised by different speakers.*

Following Mr. Luce's paper, Mr. Jesse Cunningham, librarian of the School of Mines and Metallurgy, Rolla, Missouri, reported as the Chairman of the clipping committee his investigation of the use and methods of handling and filing newspaper clippings. A very careful digest of a questionnaire sent to over thirty selected libraries, discussed the matters of obtaining clippings by these various libraries, the arrangement of the material for clipping, the service rendered by the clipping bureaus, classification and methods of filing, as well as the indexing and eliminating of dead material, closing the report with a discussion of the use and value of clip-

*See full discussion in "Special Libraries."

pings, their disadvantages, the purchasing of clippings on special subjects and the several conclusions arrived at by the committee. A most excellent report was rendered. The committee was continued and requested to extend its inquiries along the lines indicated.

In the absence of Dr. J. Franklin Crowell of the Wall Street Journal, his paper upon the "Clipping methods of the Wall Street Journal library" was read by title.

Mr. H. W. Wilson of Minneapolis, followed with a paper entitled, "Problems of printed indexes in special fields."

"The need for printed indexes in special fields has been made manifest by the thousands of fugitive scraps of indexes that libraries here and there spend their time and energy in producing for temporary use.

"First steps toward printed indexes are both fragmentary and inadequate. It seems to be time to take the next step in the development of index-making, a step which involves concentration of scattered ideas—a step which should be successful because it means comprehensiveness, thoroughness, uniformity, economy and efficiency.

"The special fields of literature in which printed indexes are most likely to succeed are thought to be as follows, in about the order mentioned: Industrial arts, agriculture, education, social problems.

"It will scarcely be necessary to defend here the alphabetical index as opposed to the classified arrangement. While a classified list of articles has its value in informing specialists what has been published in their respective fields in one particular month, or year, it is almost useless as a book of ready reference in a library—useless even to the technically trained, exasperating to the layman.

"In a classed list the responsibility for finding an article rests with the searcher."

The great difficulty caused by unsatisfactory nomenclature especially in rapid-growing new technical fields, was dwelt upon at some length. In conclusion, he

said, "At least one new field should be opened up each year."

In the general discussion which followed, the questions of paper for clipping mounts, adhesives, and preservatives, were touched upon.

THIRD SESSION

The third session of the Association was held on Thursday evening, June 27, 1913, opening with the president in the chair and about thirty persons present.

Mr. Samuel H. Ranck of Grand Rapids, reported as Chairman of the municipal yearbook committee.¹

In the absence of Mr. H. H. B. Meyer, his paper entitled, "The division of bibliography of the Library of Congress as a clearing house for bibliographical information," was read by Mr. Bruncken of the same library.

"I am planning, in the interval before the next meetings of the state legislature, to prepare a list of the subjects which have been investigated by the several state libraries or state legislative reference bureaus." This will enable the division of bibliography to inform an inquiring librarian what states have taken up any question his own state legislature might be interested in. Several fixed forms of cards for doing this work in order to eliminate extensive correspondence are shown.²

Miss Marie F. Lindholm presented a paper entitled "A review of the chief sources of special library collections."³

While the author has been for some time connected with a prominent public service commission, the very careful and painstaking enumeration of sources of material can but prove of unusual value to almost any special library in the country. Under thirteen main headings the paper treated of a general reference foundation, reference sources of particular value to public service commission or corporation libraries, chief reference sources for a financial li-

¹Report on file with Sec'y of S. L. A.

²For paper in full see forthcoming "Special Libraries."

³For special reprint address Public Service Commission Library of New York, or the Secretary's office.

library, those for a municipal reference library, current books and special reports, periodicals, government and state reports, society publications, company and trade publications, legislation, legal decisions and briefs, manuscripts, original records, blueprints, maps, etc., and finally co-operation in special library work. Should one about to form a library of almost any character have before him this paper he would without serious effort gather about himself, without other help, a splendid foundation upon which to build his immediate specialty. Much complementary discussion followed.

Following this the report of the Secretary-Treasurer discussed the widening aspects of the Association, the growth of its membership, both in numbers and in distribution, the financial condition of the society, the large number of inquiries which had been received by the secretary's office,

indicating the spread of the special library idea, the methods for advertising the Association and its activities which are of interest to the members, the results obtained in the past year through the Responsibility Districts established at the beginning of Mr. Handy's administration, the value and possibilities of the employment exchange operated through the secretary's office, and the contemplated brochure advocated by the Executive Board for placing before interested parties the important facts, such as the Association's growth, scope, purpose, constitution, membership, committees, printed literature available, etc.

After receiving the report of the Executive Board and accepting the same in toto and transacting such other business matters as remained, electing new officers, etc., the meeting adjourned sine die.

GUY E. MARION,
Secretary.

POST-CONFERENCE TRIP

Saturday noon, June 28, the post conference party left Hotel Kaaterskill with feelings of mingled pleasure and regret. The conference week with its happy reunion of old friends was past, and the prospect of a week of travel with its unknown possibilities of sight seeing and impromptu library conferences banished the depression that follows the breaking up of a happy party. Vexing details, as paying unusually large hotel bills, arguing with the drivers about double payment of bus fares and exorbitant tipping of porters to insure prompt delivery of trunks at the station, were soon forgotten. For a week we were to be care-free, shifting all responsibility and planning to our genial conductors, Mr. F. W. Faxon and Mr. C. H. Brown. Even trunks were forgotten, not only by the party, but by the railroad people until the casual inquiry of one of the party brought them to light and started them again on their journey.

The rapid descent by the Otis Elevating Railway with the accompanying ringing

sensations in the ears made us realize the great height at which we had lived the past week. We soon found ourselves in the heavier, warmer air of the sea level speeding towards Albany through the fertile farms of the Hudson Valley. We caught occasional glimpses of the Hudson, bearing on its sluggish tide the graceful, white-sailed, pleasure crafts and the clumsy, but vitally freighted, canal barges.

Comfortable quarters in Albany were found at the Hotel Ten Eyck, and the party spent the evening at the new Education Building visiting the new State library and library school. The building is considered one of the most beautiful in the world. It is certainly very beautiful when considered alone, but it is a pity that it could not have had a larger site and more advantageous setting. The general plan of the building with its magnificent distances gives a corridor appearance to all the library rooms except the reference room, which is superb in its general effect and equipment. The lighting scheme of this